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Amendments to the Claims

Please amend Claims 1, 13, 19 and 25. The Claim Listing below will replace all prior versions of the claims in the application:

Claim Listing

1. (currently amended) A digital cross connect comprising:

   plural switching stages, each stage having plural switches receiving plural frames of time multiplexed input data and switching the data in time and space;

   a frame counter at each switch synchronized to a frame clock; and

   a master switch within the plural switching stages from which the frame clock is propagated to downstream switches and from output ~~stages~~ switches to input ~~stages~~ switches.

2. (original) A digital cross connect as claimed in claim 1 wherein propagation of the frame clock is matched to data distribution between the switches.

3. (original) A digital cross connect as claimed in claim 2 wherein the frame clock is derived from a frame of data.

4. (original) A cross connect as claimed in claim 3 wherein the frame clock is derived from an A1 byte of a SONET frame.

5. (original) A cross connect as claimed in claim 3 wherein each switch selects between an external frame clock input and a frame clock derived from one of plural frames of data.

6. (original) A cross connect as claimed in claim 5 wherein the frame counter of each switch is aligned to a defined offset from the selected frame clock.

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7.   (original) A cross connect as claimed in claim 6 wherein a switch selects between one of plural redundant frame clock inputs propagated from the master switch, each with a respective defined offset.

8.   (original) A cross connect as claimed in claim 1 wherein a switch frame counter is aligned to a defined offset from the frame clock.

9.   (original) A cross connect as claimed in claim 8 wherein a switch comprises multiple frame counters having different alignments.

10.   (original) A cross connect as claimed in claim 9 wherein each switch includes two frame counters.

11.   (original) A cross connect as claimed in claim 9 wherein a single switch module implements portions of two stages of the cross connect using respective frame counters.

12.   (original) A cross connect as claimed in claim 1 wherein the master switch is in a middle stage.

13.   (currently amended) A method of providing a digital cross connect comprising:
      providing plural switching stages, each stage having plural switches which receive plural frames of time multiplexed input data and which switch the data in time and space;
      propagating a frame clock from a master switch within the plural switching stages to downstream switches and from output ~~stages~~ switches to input ~~stages~~ switches; and
      synchronizing a frame counter at each switch to the propagated frame clock.

14.   (original) A method as claimed in claim 13 wherein propagation of the frame clock is matched to data distribution between the switches.

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15. (original) A method as claimed in claim 14 wherein the frame clock is derived from a frame of data.

16. (original) A method as claimed in claim 15 wherein the frame clock is derived from an A1 byte of a SONET frame.

17. (original) A method as claimed in claim 15 wherein each switch selects between an external frame clock input and a frame clock derived from one of plural frames of data.

18. (original) A method as claimed in claim 17 wherein the frame counter of each switch is aligned to a defined offset from the selected frame clock.

19. (currently amended) A method as claimed in claim ~~17~~ 18 wherein a switch selects between one of plural redundant frame clock inputs propagated from the master switch, each with a respective defined offset.

20. (original) A method as claimed in claim 13 wherein a switch frame counter is aligned to a defined offset from the frame clock.

21. (original) A method as claimed in claim 20 further comprising generating plural frame counters at a switch, each frame counter aligned to a different offset from the frame clock.

22. (original) A method as claimed in claim 21 wherein each switch includes two frame counters.

23. (original) A method as claimed in claim 21 wherein a single switch module implements portions of two stages of the cross connect using respective frame counters.

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24.   (original) A method as claimed in claim 13 wherein the master switch is in a middle
stage.

25.   (currently amended) A digital cross connect comprising:
            plural switching stages, each stage having plural switching means for receiving
plural frames of the time multiplexed data and switching the data in time and space;
            frame counter means at each switch for providing a frame count synchronized to a
frame clock; and
            master switch means within the plural switching stages for propagating the frame
clock to downstream switches and from output stages switches to input stages switches.